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## Young Ministers' Number

**PAUL W. HOON**
"The Words of God in the Mind of Christ"

**KYLE HASELDEN**
"The Burden of the Valley of Vision"

**HOMER V. YINGER**
"Priorities of the Spirit"

**K. MORGAN EDWARDS**
"The Light of Faith for an Hour of Darkness"

**HOWARD C. SCHARFE**
"Now That War Has Come"

**HAROLD L. LUNGER**
"White Corpuscles of Civilization"

**RALPH C. LANKLER**
"A Pastoral Prayer"

**PREACHER PROBLEMS**

**WILLIAM L. STIDGER**
"Preaching Out of the Overflow"

# The Words of God in the Mind of Christ

BY PAUL W. HOON

*"I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." John 17:8.*

THE tremendous power of words over minds has never before been so dramatically proved as it is today. The restrictions of censorship, something unknown to the American people for more than twenty years, silently witness to the power of words. The deadliest weapon of our century, "propaganda," uses words as its bullets. The "strong men" of our generation—Churchill, Hitler, Roosevelt—have not without reason made themselves masters of words. Indeed, the historic battles of our time are being fought over words and the ideas behind them—such words as "democracy," "the new order," "tyranny," "freedom," "food," "empire." Without exaggeration we can say that words ultimately rule life and determine the destiny of man and his world.

A company of men meet in Philadelphia in the latter years of the 18th century and compose words together in what is known as the American Constitution; and thereby a government is born and a "way of life" established that endure through 150 years and become the envy of most of the civilized world. A German philosopher and journalist in the 19th century composes words together in a book on economics; and that book, Karl Marx's *Das Kapital,* gives rise to a movement whose tremors, like an earthquake, shake the nations of the world. An Austrian soldier, imprisoned for sedition against a state, composes words together in a volume entitled *Mein Kampf;* and that volume becomes to millions the bible of a revolution that plunges a world into war. Verily, the history of man and his world is the history of his words, of great crucial words such as "bread," "liberty," "beauty," "fatherland," "God," "truth," "law."

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But to perceive the power of words is also to acknowledge the danger of man's getting hold of the wrong words and the necessity of getting hold of the right words. For we have plenty of words today that do evil things to men's minds, words that poison and inflame and betray. Archibald MacLeish, in his manifesto of democratic faith, *The American Cause,* writes that the enemies of civilization in our world today are not saboteurs in material things alone. "They are saboteurs also in the things of the mind. And it is in the things of the mind that their sabotage is most dangerous. To destroy a machine or a manufacturing plant is one thing. . . . To destroy the integrity of words . . . is another." The gravest threat to civilization today is being made by men who turn "printing presses, like machine guns," on the minds of the masses. Never before have we so needed words that do the right things to men's minds, that amidst evil reveal the good, that expose deceit and lay bare truth, and that out of confusion bring order.

The glory of the gospel is that we have such words. They have been spoken! They can be heard! Christ, above all others, is history's master of words; not merely in a grammatical or artistic sense—though he is that—but supremely in a prophetic sense, in the sense that Christ profoundly knew and authoritatively announces the words that truly rule life. This is the meaning, I think, of a great sentence of Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper. Jesus was giving account of his stewardship of the mission that God had laid upon him. He was praying for his disciples to whom he had entrusted that mission. He prayed: "Father, I have given unto them the words thou gavest me." The words of God announced to man in the mind of Christ! These are the words we must hear and have!

I

One of these words is "judgment," a comprehensive, synoptic word that figures a great truth often on Jesus' lips and in his mind. Other words cluster about it, of course—such words as righteousness, sin, heaven, hell, reward, penalty, conscience. But these are only lesser variations on the greater theme, the theme of judgment, the theme that life is inescapably a moral matter because sovereign over life is a God who morally discriminates and with a chastening will judges and rewards and penalizes. Jesus' word "judgment" means that we can't "buck the universe," in the phrase of Studdert-Kennedy, and ultimately get away with it. It means that we can't do evil or good, right or wrong, without God's knowing and caring about it. It means that life is inescapably moral.

And I submit: Is there any word we need more to hear today? Indeed, is there any word whose truth is being more tragically verified? For years we have refused to hear this word. How often has philosophy said in varying accents: "There are no moral absolutes. Right and wrong are relative." How boastfully has science said: "Moral sanctions are not ultimately objective. The laws of nature, survival of the fittest, biological selection, psychological determinism, these are the grain of life." How boldly has statecraft said: "Might makes right. Self-interest reinforced with guns is what counts." How subtly in one way and another has education said, in the words of an indictment drawn by one of its own prophets, President Hutchins of Chicago: "There is no ultimate difference between truth and falsity, good and bad, right and wrong. These are whims, prejudices, rationalizations, Sunday school tags." Even the church has softened down if not abandoned judgment. Do you know that biting comment on Protestant theology made by H. G. Wells in his *Autobiography?* He tells how his mother, when he was a boy, sought to conceal from his young eyes a page in a picture book depicting the horrors of hellfire. Over the figure of the devil disposing of the damned with a pitchfork she had pasted blank sheets of paper. And unconsciously, Wells writes, "she had anticipated the general trend of Protestant theology and hidden hell away!" While it may not be an unmitigated loss to have hell hidden away, what about the judgment of which it is a symbol in the mind of that Galilean who terribly talks about it?

The moral reality in life, the righteous judgment of God—these we have thought we could manage without. And what have we got? Here is an answer, made by a newspaper columnist—not a theologian or a minister: "Twenty years of observing the wars, miseries and savageries of the twentieth century," writes Dorothy Thompson, "have convinced me that what is happening to us is essentially a moral collapse. . . . In eighteenth-century America the leadership of the country was in the hands of preachers, scholars and soldiers. Whatever their limitations they had a strict moral sense." They ". . . had a conception of sin. They read the Bible, believed in the Ten Commandments, taught their progeny hellfire. . . . That moral basis was the very basis for the new world. . . . I don't know just when this moral code was replaced by the idea that wrongdoing is not profitable. If you listen to the radio dramas nowadays, you learn that crime doesn't pay. . . . The G-men always get the gangster in the end. In the old days it used to be God and remorse that were the retribution. Nowadays God is J. Edgar Hoover and he's an inadequate substitute."

Is not our world shattered today because it has put "inadequate substitutes" in place of the moral reality of God? We have not listened to the mind of Christ announcing "judgment"! But judgment, we may as well see, is not only a true word; it is the final word. For science does not have the last word. Education does not have the last word. Philosophy, economics, politics—these do not have the last word. Nothing *human* has the last word. Only *God* has the last word. That word is the word God gave Christ and which he has given to us. It is a word whose truth is verified by life itself, the truth that evil brings its own destruction, that the moral order cannot be written or bombed out of life. It is a word carved on the ruins of history. It is the word "judgment."

II

"I have given unto them the words which thou hast given me." "Judgment" is one. *"Love"* is another. We

cannot hear Christ speak and not hear the word "love." Other words also derive from this—such words as give, forgive, service, sacrifice, cross, pity, good will. But again these are only variations of the greater truth: that love, also, is the grain of life, "the universe's own principle of cohesion." And I ask, was this word ever needed more than today? For the word "hatred" is what most men are hearing and speaking. Never before, I suppose, with the possible exception of the last months of the First World War, was there such intense, world-wide hatred, hatred "made to order" and carried to the *n*th degree. Because this is so, it is not easy today to hear, much less to speak, the word "love."

PAUL W. HOON

A man must know what he is doing when he utters and affirms Christ's word "love." He must not oversimplify it. He must not sentimentalize it. We have all heard shallow people say that "all we need to solve the world's problems is just to love one another." But it's not that simple. You have to know something of what love means. You have to ask: "What is 'love' as Christ in God's name speaks it to our stricken world?"

For one thing, love is a permanent attitude toward life, as we may be sure it is God's permanent attitude toward life. Love does not go out the window when "acts of perfidy" or sudden assault or declarations of war come in. When the strain on it is greatest, love is strongest. Love must mean to us what it means to E. Stanley Jones: "I did not have one code of morals on Saturday the 6th, and another code on Sunday the 7th of December," he writes. "What Christ meant to me Saturday, he meant to me Sunday . . . since my code is the same, my conduct will have to be the same . . . it was my business as a Christian to reconcile men . . . before the war; it is still my business. . . ." Love changeth not!

Thus love is also a matter of the will. It is not mere emotion nor an exercise of the mind. The gospel never conclusively measures love either in God or in man by the thermometer of emotion or by the yardstick of intellect. Rather, the gospel always talks about love in terms of what God and man *do* to each other and of what man *does* to his fellow men. It is on this rock, incidentally, that I think many of the Christian supporters of war make shipwreck. They would persuade us that we may love our enemy with the intellect or lips or emotions, and with our wills engage in his destruction. But Jesus never said: "*Like* your enemies. *Feel* good and *think* well toward them that hate you." No, Jesus said: "*Love* your enemies. *Do* good to them that hate you."

Love is a matter of the imagination, of imagination to conceive what love means when we affirm it to be man's way of life with his fellow men because it is God's way with us. No one has ever taxed man's imagination more than Christ when he commanded us to love one another as he has loved us and to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. These, when you stop to ponder them, are two tremendous stimuli to the use of our imaginations. They are two dimensions—one, the dimension of divine mercy; the other, the dimension of human need interpreted to us by our own needs—with which we can imaginatively measure what our love must be.

Love is faith. To hear Christ's word means that we not only understand what love is. It also means that we believe in its efficacy and finality. Nothing so appalls me these days as the ease with which people seem to lay aside their faith in the efficacy of love. Sometimes with gentle sighs of regret, sometimes in jest at those who would believe in the cross as "a success story," they usher love out of the arena of human struggle. But as Christ spoke the word, love means an invincible faith in love's power. Indeed, it means an unflinching faith in its practicability. More, even in its omnipotence! "We believe that God is love," writes John Oman, "when we can reverse it and say that love is God, that, in whatsoever weakness it may meet us, it wields the might of omnipotence!"

"I have given unto them the words thou hast given me," prays Christ. Is he not yet praying that we shall hear, above all others, the word "love"? For this is the word we must hear and have. It alone can defend us from saboteurs of consciences and minds!

## III

"I have given unto them the words thou hast given me." "Words of life" we sometimes call them. And they are that. Indeed the greatest word of all is *"life"* as Christ speaks it to us. Men had heard this word before he spoke it, yes. But after Christ came and uttered and lived it, never could it be the same again. For "life" as Christ speaks it must mean at least two great things to us. It means first the elemental truth that God and this universe are on the side of life. The

death man deals to his fellow men, the destruction he works, these we dare to believe are against the grain of the universe. No matter how life is smashed by bombs and ripped by shrapnel and ground under tanks, no matter how life is shriveled by starvation or spotted with typhus, Christ forever cries: "I announce life!" Death and destruction are not final. They are alien to the heart of this universe. Christ's God and our God is a God of life and not of death. Mussolini may shout: "War, not peace, is the permanent condition of mankind." But we know better! For Christ has given unto us the word God gave unto him—"life."

But more: "Life" as Christ announces it assures us that God not only purposes life as existence, but supremely as fruition and richness and fulfillment. God is not only on the side of life. He is supremely on the side of ever more valuable and abundant life. For a time, yes, man's valuable things may be crushed. "The things that matter most"—in the phrase of W. P. Montague—may for a time "be at the mercy of the things that matter least." But no matter how men may destroy, they cannot dam up the torrent of God's creativity. Man's cathedrals may be shattered with bombs. But all the ugly things in our world cannot crush divine intimations of beauty as yet unseen and unborn that God has in store for us. The truth in man's libraries and laboratories may be burned or outlawed or prostituted to wicked ends. But man's most hideous acts cannot break God's purpose to enhance life with new revelations of truth. The mercy of which man is capable in his best hours may be swallowed up in vengeance. But all the fiery hatreds of the world cannot consume God's creative love toward men. Not destruction but creation, not frustration but fulfillment, not death but "life"—this is the sublimest word of the gospel.

The words that shall rule our world? They are not the words men hear and speak today—"hatred," "enemy, "death," "slavery," "annihilation." No, the words that rule are the sovereign words addressed to us by the mind of God in the mind of Christ! They are the words "judgment," "love," "life."

THE MINISTERS whose sermons appear in this issue have graduated from seminaries within the past five years. They have been named by the heads of their schools as notably successful as preachers and pastors. These sermons have been selected from more than thirty which were submitted by young ministers who were given honorable mention. A number of the other sermons received will be published in succeeding issues of the *Pulpit*.

THE EDITORS.

# The Burden of the Valley of Vision

BY KYLE HASELDEN

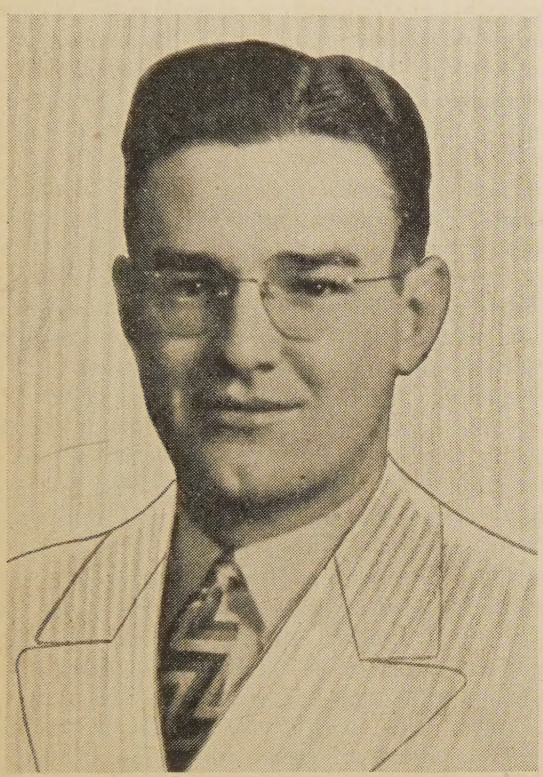
VICTOR HUGO'S novel, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame,* which tells the stirring story of Quasimodo, that twisted, misshapen mass of humanity, that cripple who played like a living gargoyle along the arches of the church, has at least one claim to historical accuracy. And that is its portrayal of the place of the medieval church in the lives of medieval people. The church was a sanctuary, a haven, a fortress within whose walls the hounded hunchback was safe from the assaults of his sadistic tormentors. Only when he carried off one of their favorite daughters and thus enraged the gipsy mob to violent and insane action did they dare to storm the church doors to gain their revenge. Under the vaulted ceilings of the great cathedral the hunchback was their equal—whatever he might be outside—and in that fortress he was protected from their taunting lips and scuffing boots.

### *STRENGTH AS RESPONSIBILITY*

What sense of indebtedness was it that forced the church to grant the hunchback refuge? What claim did Quasimodo have upon the cathedral by which he could request the protection of its massive walls and soaring spires? Why did the church grant a half-depraved man refuge within its sacredness? We may say at once that the church did not in that instance act upon any sense of legal obligation. Although the hunchback could and did claim the traditional refuge, he could not claim that the church was lawfully obliged to protect him. There was no legal contract between them; he had done the church no service which would require that the church recompense him in turn. In the second place, in protecting the hunchback and other miscreants the church did not act with charitableness because of any sense of gratitude. Quasimodo and his kind had nothing to give the church except trouble and embarrassment. He had no wealth, no power, no prestige with which he might play the philanthropist and shower graces upon the cathedral. It must be concluded, then, that the church, in that fictional instance, acted with charitableness solely out of its sense of the debt of strength. The hunchback was weak; the church was strong. He was poor; the church was wealthy. He was impotent; the church was powerful. He was maddened with grief, loneliness and keen awareness of his misshapen body and twisted mind; and the church was his sole solace, his only salvation from himself, his only covert of comfort. That was the sole basis upon which the church was obligated to Quasimodo: the strength of the church—the weakness of the hunchback.

This conclusion leads us to the central thought of this morning's theme, a consideration of the burden of the valley of vision. Isaiah used this expression to describe the city of Jerusalem. He intimated that Jerusalem's blessings, its vision, its strength being superior

to that of other cities, it had therefore a responsibility superior to that of other cities; and Isaiah implied further that if this responsibility were neglected, if this burden were not assumed, Jerusalem would be laid waste and its assets would be taken from it. Every additional advantage meant to the city an additional responsibility. Jesus echoed this truth in the words of our morning scripture: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you."



KYLE HASELDEN

The Apostle Paul in a line rounds out and completes the scriptural backing of this thought. He says to the Romans: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." What had Paul received from the Greeks that he was legally bound to pay back? What had the barbarians ever done for him that he should feel himself in their debt? What had the Romans given him that he should feel bound to carry them the gospel? Nothing! As we use the word, he did not "owe" them anything. There had been little exchange of values between them. His education was rooted in Judaism; his philosophy was largely Jewish; and his religion had come to him out of his own background. In the main the Greeks had met him with disdain and abuse; the Romans had showered him with persecution. And yet he was deeply conscious of the fact that he was indebted both to the Greeks and to the Romans, not only to the wise from whom he could learn much but to the unwise who could learn much from him. And he was ready to carry the gospel to those who had abused him.

### *THE VALLEY OF VISION—AND THE BLIND*

Paul had recognized and had accepted the burden of his valley of vision. He knew himself indebted to all who were in need, to all who lacked his strength of spirit, to all who were without his enlightenment, to all who were yet deprived by ignorance of that inner richness which he had received from his knowledge of Christ. Thus Paul gives us the ultimate rule of Christian responsibility: in its essence, the scope of our Christian obligation to our fellow men must be measured not by what others have done or have not done for us but by the depth of human need and our ability to satisfy that necessity. This runs counter to the cardinal doctrines of the practical; and yet this is a central Christian truth; the valley of vision must assume the burden of the blind; the strong must carry the weak.

Vision is indebted to blindness, not because it may commercialize ignorance, but because it is the only possible eradicator of ignorance. Strength is indebted to weakness, not because it can prostitute weakness, but because it alone can lift and care for the weak. Freedom is indebted to slavery, not because slavery ever made a contribution to liberty, but because free men are the only men who can ever liberate slaves. Because he despised the enslaving of the human spirit, Thomas Paine could say: "Where liberty is not, there is my country." He was ready to assume the burden of his vision. Plenty is indebted to poverty, not because prosperity is legally obligated to destitution, but because only those who have can rescue those who have not. It is the duty of good taste, purity, culture, education to care for those who, for whatever reason, have fallen short of these accomplishments. Spiritual enlightenment is forever indebted to superstition, ignorance and bigotry for the simple reason that such darkness in the world will continue until those who are blessed with Christian light place it abundantly at the disposal of those who wander in the wilderness of confusion.

They that have the light must walk in the light that they may become the children of light to illumine the future. That is our common Christian obligation; that is the debt of strength we owe the world, the burden of those who have the Christian vision.

### *LAW OF SERVICE WRITTEN INTO LIFE*

Write this law wherever you will across any phase of life, and you will find that it stands the test of application. In the home the child's weakness, the child's incompetence, the child's inability to sustain his life alone make the parents the servants of the child. And as time reverses these conditions, the feebleness, the inadequacy, the weakness of the aged parents make the child, who has meanwhile grown into strength, the servant of the parents. That is the debt of strength.

In the modern classroom the tyrannous schoolmaster is no longer allowed. Schools are now dedicated to

children; systems, methods and teachers alike are made the servants of the needs of the child. Because of what he knows the teacher is indebted to the child who does not know; whatever truth he has the teacher is obligated to impart, not merely out of a sense of honesty which makes him want to repay indirectly those who taught him, not simply out of gratitude, but because the apprehension of truth carries with it the responsibility of spreading that truth. That is the debt of knowledge.

There are few of us who have not at one time or another been in a perilous position where we owed the salvation of our life to the trained mind and skillful hand of some member of the medical profession. And though we may not always have been so thoughtful as to express it, we have felt within us a profound indebtedness to the men and women who can correct and preserve the complicated human mechanism. But however true this is, every good doctor knows that he is more obligated to his patients than they to him. He is, by reason of his training, his talent and the code of his profession, a servant. Wherever you apply it, this rule of the spirit stands the test: vision must bear the burden of ignorance; the strong must lift and carry the weak.

### *FAITH IN A WORLD OF DESPAIR*

It goes without saying that every one of us who lives now under the benedictions of the Christian faith is deeply indebted to others because of what they have done for us. If, as is true, the Christian church in this land has now itself become the valley of vision in this world, we may rejoice in that fact but we can take no credit for it. It has rightly been said of us that when Christ was preaching his way of love in Galilee, our ancestors were still practicing cannibalism, slavery, polygamy, paganism. Who can say where we would now be in the scale of man's slow climb out of darkness had there not been missionary-minded men who at whatever risks to themselves obeyed Christ's injunction to preach the gospel to every living creature? We have no way of repaying them for that inestimable service to us except by sending the light of the cross of Christ beyond the pale of our own secure culture into the nights of ignorance and superstition, disease and calamity. We have no way of calculating the numberless advantages which we have inherited from the immediate and distant dead of our own land and our own faith who thought of their happiness in terms of our success and we have no other way of paying them our respects save by making their dreams of a better world ever less fantastic.

But I would put this challenge to your sense of responsibility as a Christian church in a warring world on a higher level than that of mere gratitude. I do not ask you merely to repay the past on an equivalent commercial basis; I do not ask you merely to show your thankfulness through material evidences; I ask rather that this church and its people with their special blessings of talent pay the debt of strength.

Are we enlightened? Then by the automatic workings of this higher principle of charitableness we owe enlightenment to the world. Are we clothed and fed and housed to the point of comfort? Then by this law of the spirit we are compelled to clothe and feed and shelter those who are in weakness, those who by some tragic roll of fate are naked, famished and homeless. Do we hear with ease and freedom the liberating words of the Christian gospel? Then it is to be expected that we shall through every avenue leading from us send to the wandering, the despairing, the agonized and the enslaved the warmth and light and life of the Christian way. Are we among those who still have some reason to be hopeful for a better world? Then we must breathe the spirit of hope into the collapsed lungs of our diseased world. We are among the inhabitants of the valley of vision; and the burden of that valley is now laid upon our shoulders.

### *MAINTAINING THE VISION*

Of course, preliminary to the assumption of such burdens is the necessity that the church protect and preserve its valley of vision from those choking fogs which now seep into all man's habitations. When all the world seems bent upon living in darkness—or, at best, by the rushlights of yesterday—the church has certainly this primary duty: to maintain its vision. The surgeon must preserve the skill of his hands, the teacher his knowledge and wisdom, the parent his providing capacity if their responsibilities are to be properly executed. And it follows that the first duty of the Christian church in a pagan world is to remain a *Christian* church. The expression of the Apostle James is pertinent again. Let the church keep itself "unspotted from the world," being always in the thick of the struggle and yet always above it, sharing the sorrows and sufferings of the people but never giving way to the temptation to compromise which brings to the people only short-lived alleviations, walking through the streets of need without fear of spoiling its garments but preserving still its skill, its knowledge and wisdom, and its saving capacity. They that have the light must *walk* in the light if they are to be the children of light to illumine the future.

A thick mire of contamination is now spread over the face of the earth and we have to walk through it and at times we shall slip and fall; but we do not have to wallow. To be indignant without cursing, to abhor evil without damning the soul of the evildoer, to resent injury without conniving retaliation, to be patriotic without prejudice, to be hurt and not to hate, to be stealthily wronged and openly to forgive, to despise the enemy's works of destruction and yet to continue loving his art, to detest tyranny without detesting the helplessly enslaved, to love our own kind with such wise love as will flower in wise good will for the foe, to be despitefully used and persecuted and still to pray, "Father, forgive them"—to keep that vision and to give it, so much as is possible, to the people of a warring land has now become almost wholly the burden of the church.

Something similar to the words that Cyrano de Bergerac spoke to Roxane in his dying moments, Chris-

tians ought to be prepared to fling into the teeth of this war. Cyrano, who could not be conquered by his enemies, had been mortally wounded by clumsy workmen and spoke in Roxane's garden his last grand affirmation: "In spite of you, there is one thing I shall take with me, and tonight when I enter God's house, my salutation shall sweep the blue threshold, with something free from creases, free from stain which I shall carry in spite of you—and that is—my plume."

Something similar to that the Christian and his church should be prepared to say to this war: "In spite of you, I shall carry my hope high; I shall keep my plume of decency, tolerance and self-respect creaseless and without stain. That mob madness which destroys art out of hatred for the artist; which abjures the use of names and words because they have a foreign ring; which will admit no virtue to the enemy, no sympathy for the innocent child of the foe; which smears and derides and detests all that is alien—that hatred, that pettiness, that vicious madness shall not possess my soul. If, as I must, I have to walk through this fire with my people, I shall come out, God helping me, with as much as possible of my spirit unsinged and unseared by these flames. If, as I must, I now have to drink with others from this cup of woe, I will not let it make me reel and wallow in drunkenness and shame."

### *CHRIST NEEDS DISCIPLES NOW!*

And it follows, obviously, that the second burden of the valley of vision is the execution of its vision. This world crisis faces the church with a most dangerous opportunity. The danger is that the churches will now falsify all that they have stood for in the long past, that they will cower before great evils and keep silent and safe, that they will desert the great outreach of the Christian mission, thus blessing indirectly the evils which Christ died to overcome. And the opportunity? Ah, there has never been an opportunity for the church like this one: a chance to preserve and propagate God's great truths when they are most forsaken, to lift the fallen and the abused, to champion the mistreated, to raise above this cauldron of disaster some light of hope.

Is there hatred everywhere? Then Christ never needed loving disciples so much as he needs them now. Is truth being crushed to earth? Then someone had better stand up for truth if its embers are ever again to blaze into those leaping flames that light the feet of men. Are men growing hard and cruel, bent on destroying one another with every devilish device? Then let there be Christians who with warm love and tender mercy bind up the wounds of the world. Is mankind losing faith in God and in itself? Then more than ever there is need for men and women who will not allow the lamps of faith and hope to be extinguished. The future leans heavily upon this hour. And the Christian church is called upon to shoulder this burden of need because it is in the blessed valley of vision. May the years and centuries be enabled to speak well of this hour in which, knowing our strength, we paid its debt and, having the vision, we assumed its burden.

# Priorities of the Spirit

**By Homer V. Yinger**

*Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but this one thing I do. . . . Philippians 3:13a.*

HERE in America we are becoming increasingly aware of what it means to wage total war. The old channels of habit and thought are having to give way before the necessities of united effort. It means a drastic reorganization of life for many. Jobs are found or lost overnight. Boys are leaving by the thousands for the training camps, and already there are hundreds of new gold star mothers.

In less drastic ways we are all affected. In order to accomplish the task set before us certain things take precedence over everything else. "Business as usual" is now out of the question. Priorities of steel and tin and rubber and manpower are depriving us of much that we had heretofore taken for granted and we know there is much more to come. But we accept these facts because we know that in no other way can our national purpose be achieved. Without sacrifice there can be no victory. Without the channeling and focusing of our utmost effort we cannot hope to stop the forces of tyranny. We submit to priorities in industry and business because we recognize this as the inevitable choice of those who take seriously the task set before them.

But we are much more acutely aware than we were in 1917 that the task before us is immeasurably greater than guns and battleships, much more profound than mere victory on the field of battle. Important as these are, military success is, after all, only a means to an end. The long-term battle is one of justice and fair play. It is a truism now that we won the last war and lost the peace—lost the peace because we had learned what sacrifices we had to make to win the war, but had not learned what we must give up to make peace secure. Then, as now, we accepted the economic priorities required by the war effort, but failed to make adequate preparation for the long-range priorities of a world in which international law must replace international anarchy.

We shall fail again this time—even if we win the trial by arms—unless we take into measured account the more fundamental requirements of the long years. Those requirements are of the spirit of man. They have to do with his lasting loyalties, his master motives, his inner strength. Do not take simply the word of a preacher for it. Listen to a statement which comes from the National Education Association. An adequate national defense program assumes three aspects, says this representative body: military, economic and moral. "The third division of the program for the defense of democracy, the most difficult of all, is moral or spiritual in nature. If, in the process of achieving the military and economic objectives of their program, the American people should abandon the ways, the values, the ideals of democracy . . . they would be achieving the speedy triumph of totalitarianism in the land." The

true citadel of democracy has always been liberty under law—freedom dedicated to a purpose high enough and strong enough to bind men together in spite of differences in interest and outlook. Now is the time not to neglect or belittle our spiritual resources, but to turn to them with a new humility and a chastened longing.

I

The Christian way has always been a way of priorities—priorities of the spirit. "No man can serve two masters." "Seek ye first his Kingdom and his righteousness." "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful."

Is not this the essence of Paul's letter to the Philippians? Here we have an amazing demonstration of the power of important things in the life of this cosmopolitan man of the first century. For when Paul wrote to the Philippians he was a prisoner of Rome. At the height of his powers the long arm of the Roman empire had reached out and halted his career. But, strangely enough, this letter to the church in Philippi is one of the most cheerful books in the Bible. Its mood is expressed by the famous words: "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What a remarkable statement for a man in such straits! "This one thing I do . . . I press on." His plans balked, his ministry cut short, death almost certainly staring him in the face—but no cringing, no letting down, no bitterness, only resolution and courage and even high spirits!

II

The singleness of heart that was Paul's should come to us with fresh appeal in these days. "This one thing I do." With us it is more likely to be, "These twenty things I do." We get so wrapped up in so many things that we become just a bundle of nerves. Perhaps the man most typical of our restless times was Teddy Roosevelt. He it was who could do three things at once: dictate a letter, read a book and carry on a conversation! We can't wait to listen to the radio, then read the newspaper, so we try to do both together. It isn't enough to have one job, office, school or home. We tackle several, then add on a few minor responsibilities for good measure. Is it any wonder we are somewhat in the predicament of the old lady who, being an omnivorous reader, set out to read the dictionary? When asked what she thought of it she admitted it was interesting in spots but disclosed with some irritation: "I can't seem to get the hang of the story"!

How can we "get the hang" of life's story when we have filled our hours with a hundred unrelated activities? How can we know singleness of purpose unless we are willing to eliminate the lesser things for the more important? Is it any wonder life doesn't always make sense?

Have you ever gone by a school of music on a warm day when the windows are all open and heard the myriad sounds which float forth in a jumbled nightmare of dissonance? Sometimes life seems about as harmonious as that, as though all the melodies of life at its best have gone on a rampage and are shouting and yelling and jumping and thumping inside our heads.

At such a time as this we should ponder again the ancient wisdom of a greater singleness of devotion. "What we call genius is largely extreme genuineness," said Ruskin. "There are people so fundamentally simple that they are no longer embarrassed by all the irrelevant details which obscure the outlook of the average man. They see the essential at a glance and go straight to it."

This is a day for essentials. Without greater singleness of spirit we cannot hope to meet the demands of the coming years. Let us look at some of the priorities of the spirit we now have a new imperative to cultivate.

III

More than ever we need time for reflection and meditation. One reason we see so confusedly is that our hurrying about keeps the pool of life always muddied. In the stillness of solitude the sediment of irrelevant detail sinks to the bottom and the water of life becomes clear again. "Without absolute solitude I am unable to produce anything at all," said Goethe. "Gaze long enough into the abyss and the abyss will gaze into thee," wrote Nietzsche. These elemental wisdoms our noisy world has forgotten. We skim over the surface of things like waterbugs, never guessing the refreshing coolness of the depths below.

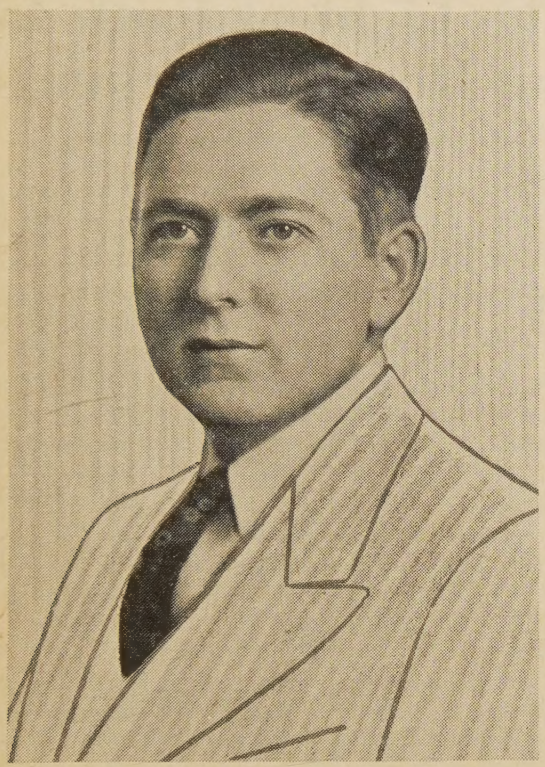
> One Lesson, Nature, let me learn from thee,
> One lesson which in every wind is blown,
> One lesson of two duties kept at one
> Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
> Of toil unsevered from tranquillity;
> Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows
> Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,
> Too great for hate, too high for rivalry.
>
> Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
> Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,
> Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
> Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
> Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil;
> Laborers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

Alone and in silence something happens to us. Here the "things recollected in tranquillity" gird us with memories, and "the soul's invincible surmise" gives a glow of hope for future days. To have time for reflection and quiet is a continuing need of the spiritual life. But it takes on fresh significance now when the call is "all out" for action, and we are in danger of forgetting that there is a Power at work not of our making in whose Will is our peace and eventually the peace of the world. Let us remind ourselves that it is no cruel fate that has brought the world to this terrible travail, but our own foolishness and stupidity

and pride. If ever we needed to pray for guidance, it is now. Regular moments of meditation and prayer are a priority in the life of every Christian today.

IV

But valuable as these moments are, we must live our life with others. We are social creatures, after all, and it is in the thick of things that the real tests come. Let us balance this matter of meditation therefore with another essential. Call it fellowship, or, if you will, just plain friendship. Why is this important? Because friends do more to keep us sane and balanced than any other factor in life; because friendship is



HOMER V. YINGER

one of the noblest expressions of the free spirit of man—and is almost in danger of becoming extinct—at least the friendship Emerson was describing when he declared that "a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature."

Shakespeare's lines from "Hamlet" are still apropos:

> Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
> Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
> But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
> Of each new-hatched unfledged comrade.

Such advice seems pretty much neglected in these days. For many, a friend is one who will play bridge with us, or suffer through our favorite stories, or accept without hesitation the latest word of gossip from our lips. In short, friendship is in a fair way to becoming an escape. It easily becomes just another way of running away from reality. Rather than stimulating us to fresh thought, rather than broadening our horizons, we are walled in, our view foreshortened, our prejudices rationalized. By limiting ourselves to those who "run around in the same circles" with us, we may find ourselves one day doing the same.

The inner test of democracy is whether or not individuals of unlike interests can voluntarily live together with understanding and respect. If the world had been more friendly, it would not now be torn apart by strife. Deep friendship is now, more than ever, a priority of the spirit. "When we have fallen through storey after storey of our vanity and aspiration and sit rueful among the ruins, then it is that we begin to measure the stature of our friends, how they stand between us and our contempt, believing in our best; how, linking us with others, and still spreading wide the influential circle, they weave us in and in with the fabric of contemporary life." They weave us in and in with the fabric of life—that is the nub of the matter. Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote those lines, knew not only defeat and suffering, but the inner grace of genuine friendship. It is the fabric of life which is now being cut to pieces, and the free fellowship of people like ourselves is the only way that fabric will be remade.

V

There is another essential of the spirit which we might call the cultivation of timeless art. In a time of flux and change we need more than ever to keep our spirits fixed on lasting things. Five years ago the mighty Ohio overflowed its banks in a great inundating flood which brought untold misery and destruction and death. The apparent reasons were unseasonable and continuing rains which fell in the Appalachian headwaters of the great river. The real reason was our failure to conserve the forests whose roots had once acted like a million fingers holding the moisture in the soil.

Whether civilization survives the terrible storm now enveloping the world may depend more upon our essential rootage in the best of our heritage than upon the immediate outcome of the war. Antaeas-like, we shall lose strength steadily if we allow ourselves to become separated from our cultural mother-earth. The study and cultivation of true art in its several forms binds us to the things that will count in the long run. It gives us a perspective on life from the mountain peaks of experience and saves us from the frustration of a limited view.

Note that this is not just a look backward. It is an investment in the future. Is not this the tragedy of modern life, that we give so much time and attention to passing things that we are forever having to make new investments, until our capital of energy and courage and imagination run out and we are faced with the barrenness of unrequited years?

But true art, whether it be sculpture or painting or architecture or music or literature—or simply the art of living, because it is an investment in what life may become, never runs out, and when all else is past it still brings a return that grows greater with the years. For art is an investment in possibilities. It is an escape from the confinement of a small literal concep-

tion of life into the reality of what might be, and is thus an endless tonic to the soul. It ascends into the infinite and gathers up our little days into jewels on the necklace of eternity.

VI

Meditation, friendship, art—these are priorities of the spirit now. But there is one more, and it stands at the center of them all. It is what St. Paul possessed when, as a prisoner of Rome, he could write: "This one thing I do . . . I press on." It is what Luther felt when standing before the diet convened to condemn him he declared: "God helping me, I can do no other." It was the faith of the Master as he set his face like flint to go to Jerusalem, confronting the calumny and hate of those who were bent on destroying him, and facing out his own inner struggle with the prayer, "Not my will but Thine be done."

Search out the most unhappy people in the world. Who are they? Those denied wealth, power, prestige? Ah no! The really miserable people are those without a steady sense of purpose, who drift aimlessly with the tide, who are gripped by no magnificent obsession. Restless, anxious, miserable, they exist but do not really live. How far removed they are from the zeal of a John Wesley, or the devotion of an Albert Schweitzer! How little they understand the mood of the young aviator who wrote a letter to his mother which was delivered to her after his death: "We are sent into this world to acquire a personality and a character to take with us that can never be taken from us. Those who just eat and sleep, prosper and procreate are no better than animals"!

Yes, you say, but that is all past now. That may have described us once, but we are all joined in the young aviator's battle now. We have an all-consuming purpose now—the destruction of the enemy! See how it has united us as a nation! See how it has caught up our halfhearted loyalties into one all-consuming loyalty!

This new unity of purpose is commendable. Without it we could not defend our nation and democracy against tyranny. But is it enough? After the war—what then? Will this new zeal be readily transformed into a like zeal for a just and lasting peace? Or will there be recrimination and revenge and disillusionment again?

There must be something beyond the defense of democracy, else that very defense may become the Achilles heel of the post-war world. There must be something greater and more permanent than any man-made system, however fine it be, if civilization is to survive. For, however just our cause, if it be not grounded in a conviction and a humility and a fellowship which take in all men everywhere, it must fail in the end.

This then is the first and inescapable obligation of everyone who calls himself Christian, to seek with all diligence the will of Him in whom alone is peace for men or nations. The struggle in which we are engaged places upon us with new urgency the need for a deeper faith, a devotion that haunts us out of our half-purposes and pries us loose from our second-rate loyalties; a conviction that impels us, in some small measure like St. Paul of old, out beyond the conveniences of personal safety and comfort; an affection as wide as humanity, as deep as brotherhood, as high as God; a fellowship which sends us forth to seek out the dark corners of suffering and shame and poverty and ignorance that we may help where we can.

For only as the eternal priorities of the spirit take possession of our lives shall peace and justice come at last to us and to a shattered world.

# The Light of Faith for an Hour of Darkness

By Kenneth Morgan Edwards

*The Father . . . who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Colossians 1:12, 13.*

ON December 10 the Pacific seaboard experienced its first blackout. A few minutes before the first warning signal sounded men were going about the routine of daily living unconcerned. As the last shrill blasts of the siren faded into the night all was in darkness. Men had left the streets to find the quiet shelter of their own family circles. Noiselessly they resumed their tasks, hearts beating more rapidly, as they waited through the night for the "all-clear" signal. The world's visible light had gone out and it would remain extinguished until the danger had been expelled successfully from the lurking shadows of night.

Perhaps there were some who accepted that first grave hour as an hour of thought. Possibly there were those who were willing to explore the record of humanity. It may be, too, that their minds chanced upon the periods of darkness in the world's long and amazing history. Strangely enough, there have been many critical moments in the checkered and bedraggled record of humanity when the light of faith seemingly has gone out. And curiously, the absence of spiritual light in the world's long history has not always been as evident as the loss of light during the modern blackout.

Our external world is a world of reality where a man abides by the emergency warning or pays the price with his life. Unfortunately, the more important world of the spirit allows the careless to make life's greatest decisions unaware of the absence of spiritual illumination. A sleeping conscience or a rationalized philosophy of life developed upon a misunderstanding of first causes, and man's perception regarding spiritual light may be dulled completely. The very fact that environmental confusion makes a man unready to arrive at life's significant choices is of little consequence to the universe. That most of our extinguished lights in the modern world have been put out by our own hands does not change the verdict of life, unless it be to increase the responsibility. Though we mistake the

originality of our choices for genius the consequences remain the same. Ours is a starkly, bitterly tragic world. We have ourselves to thank for the tragedy. Men whose eyes have been surveying our social problems with keen and fearless insight have raised their voices in stern opposition. The great theologians of the crumbling European world spoke not uncertainly about the dilemma which forced itself upon the student of spiritual problems. Indeed, no one, save the sterile and the uninformed, doubts that the world has fallen apart. Whatever else will be the task of the modern man, his present responsibility is sure. He is called to share in the reconstruction of a shattered world. He is summoned, as Kipling says, to "stoop and build . . . with worn-out tools."

## I

*Darkness is the result of wrong thinking.*

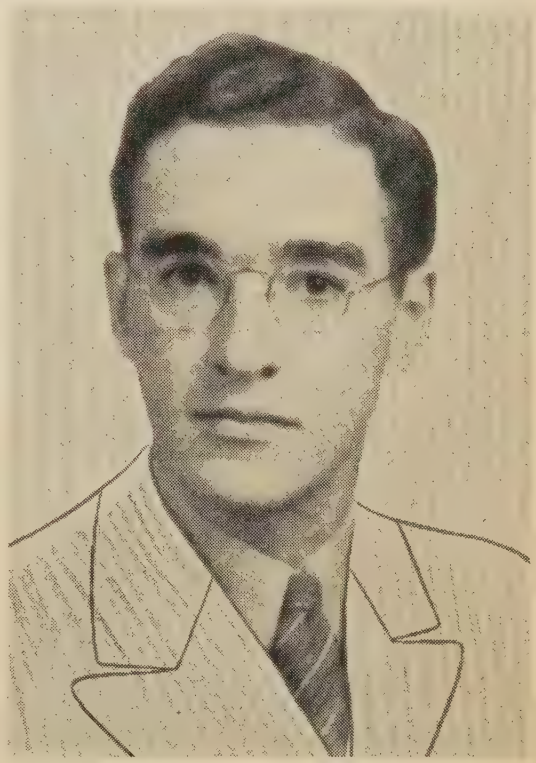
In the realm of belief man is confronted by a threefold dilemma. He has been subjected to a school of educators who have taught three certainties: first, the universe is the result of natural causation; second, man is primarily biological and his actions are the result of external causation; third, that which is secular is alone important.

The naturalists have insisted that man is the result of a natural cause. There is no need for Creative Intelligence. The natural is sufficient to explain the highest in man. Perhaps the most curious by-product of this naturalism is the totalitarian ideology. The universe is not interested in personality. Of what value is human life and of what importance is human freedom in the world of a thoroughgoing naturalist? Man is a mechanized unit in a state which exists for itself. Coerced from without man is only a part of a process. He is a means, and passively accepts the fate decreed for him by the state.

The biological man is closely related to a world of natural causation. To elevate man from a place of oblivion in a natural world his body is deified. His actions are not free. He exists only to serve the full expression of the body. He is the result of irresistible drives and causes from environment. He is not free and therefore not responsible. So runs the lament of Bertrand Russell and his contemporaries. The literary defense for this position was assumed by Theodore Dreiser and the legal protection was furnished by Clarence Darrow and his colleagues. Man was not really guilty in the moral realm. He was a victim. He was a puppet on life's stage operated by the invisible strings in the hands of an inscrutable destiny. "He is not free, and therefore is free to do as he pleases," runs the echo of the deterministic paradox. The free intelligence, exercised to detect the lack of moral freedom, does not appear inconsistent to the determinist.

Sigmund Freud laid hold upon Puritan intolerance and the lash of the Puritan conscience which excused nothing as the result of environment. Racing to the other extreme of complete determinism, Freud had the distinction of watching many a young person fall from the precipice of moral irresponsibility which he had prepared. Freud removed the Puritan veneer from the lives of many young pharisees by insisting that we must recognize with an open mind the drives that coerce moral action. Yet he led them to an end equally tragic. Van Wyck Brooks, in his *New England: Indian Summer,* pertinently reminds us: "better to be honest animals than dishonest men!—though, unhappily, the case was not so simple, and many became dishonest animals also." Released completely from moral responsibility man finds himself without any searching moral insight.

One of the embarrassing concomitants of this whole process is to find complete accord from parents. They agree that this is a correct analysis of the present-day youth problem. Then, quietly, one pays a visit to the



Kenneth Morgan Edwards

reading room in the home of the fond parent and finds among the recent so-called "best sellers" the evidence of this same basic determinism. How many parents who are worried about the associates of their children are perfectly happy to give John Steinbeck and his literary companions a prominent place in their mental lives! In New York city a few years ago the Metropolitan Opera Company was gasping for its financial breath while a theater within a few blocks was setting a new attendance record for one of the cheapest performances on America's illegitimate stage. Our determinism has served only to undermine human values and has left us floundering without aid in a sea of confusion.

The matter of secularism brings the issue closest to the church. We have been concerned chiefly with the things of this world. We have been striving with each other over the unimportant little differences while the outer world has been going to pieces. We have not had time to consider the problems which the world has

thrust upon us. It is true, of course, that the established churches have made progress in church union which is almost astounding. However, the unions are not as rapid as the breakdown of the newer denominations. Three and a half years ago I entered the pastorate of a western frontier town of two thousand people where there were four churches. When I left, a year ago, there were eight churches because one of the new denominations had gone through three ruptures. Missionaries from some of our churches proudly insist that they are saving the natives, not from paganism, but from other missionaries. We have been examining our minute differences with the microscope of unbrotherly criticism while the major issues which confront all of the churches have decayed the lives of those we sought to serve. Ours may be an age which will go down into oblivion because we have argued on the periphery while the whole central core of the world suffered decay.

If the world can be explained in terms of natural causation, the Creative God is unnecessary. The biologized man determined mechanistically finds no necessity for the soul. The secularized world makes no place for permanent eternal realities. With the lights of God, of the soul and of eternal reality gone out of our universe we stumble along in the darkness of our own making.

II

*Darkness is the result of wrong acting.*

In the matter of ethics man is equally confused. The source of his darkness is the lack of devotion with which he has pursued the light he once possessed.

For twenty years we have been preaching perfectly lovely sermons on "world peace," as harmless as they were exquisite. During those twenty years we have refused to throw our moral support wholeheartedly into the League of Nations. We have made gestures of peace through the Kellogg-Briand Pact and numerous disarmament conferences, but we have been entirely unwilling to fulfill the economic conditions which alone could bring about that peace. The vindictiveness which made it impossible for us to foster the German Republic after the First World War, which itself would have made Hitler impossible, has thwarted every honest effort in that direction since. No matter how we feel about the outrageous assault of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, there are certain causes which must be understood. A good student of economics could answer many of the questions which seemingly have baffled the church. When you force a country so desperately overpopulated out of the world market, for one reason or another, you force her to some drastic action. Visualize all of the people in the United States, excluding the Middle Atlantic, Metropolitan New York and New England areas, forced to live in California, and we would have Japan's population situation. To complete the picture most of the state's natural resources would have to be removed. It has been easy to rest complacent with resources abundant while the "have-nots" have been encouraged by our preaching to make their own way in our topsy-turvy world.

The application is obvious. We have offered an imperfect witness of a great truth. We have not found the grace to enshrine its implications in the quality of our living. While the world remains in darkness, we take comfort in our spiritual soothsaying.

We have been preaching a brotherhood of man on earth. Many sermons have fallen from our lips making great social pronouncements. Demanding more evidence of the visible Kingdom of God we have almost convinced the waiting world. We lack one thing—to live the poetry we sing. From comfortable positions we have prayed, "Thy Kingdom come, but not now." It is difficult for one Christian like Kagawa, who lives the social pronouncements he preaches, to witness so effectively that the world will forget our imperfect witness. So often our economic status depends upon the trickery with which we guard our position. Until we catch a vision of brotherhood which makes every man a son of God our preaching will remain impotent:

> Proud, favored, indifferent,
> Privileged people, unbent;
> Lowly, humble, tired folk
> Staggering underneath the yoke;
> Side by side upon the road,
> Both the children of one God.*

Another light has come out and the darkness of our social inconsistency is again a despair of our own creation.

III

*We have the light of faith.*

The Christian is not discouraged by a square facing of the facts. If the world in which he is living is one of darkness, so much the brighter will be the Christian witness. The testimony of twenty centuries of Christian history makes plain the struggle between the "light of the world" and the prevailing darkness. Hours when the light has shone most brightly have been hours with darkest backgrounds. It is as though the Spirit of the Universe were saying: "I will not have you think that faith is for the rose garden, or the afternoon with its radiant sunshine." Against the grim background of a cross the light that shineth in darkness sent the first beam of faith through the hearts of a mother and a beloved disciple. And that light penetrated until its adherents number millions and its radiance shines around the world.

Faith's light grows. Even in the personal experience of Paul there was an increasing intensity as the faith deepened. In Colossians Paul was speaking of the light of the Father which "hath delivered us from the power of darkness." That light began to pierce the encrusted soul of Saul as he witnessed the stoning of Stephen. In the first account of the light of God dawning on his waking soul there is but "a light from heaven." As the fellowship of Christ deepens the Damascus road experience becomes more real. In his defense in the temple, against the dark background of imprisonment and shipwreck, Paul testifies of a "great light." In his final defense before Agrippa Paul de-

*From one of my own poems to be published in *American Sonnets and Lyrics* (Artcraft Publications).

scribes the light of God, at high noon, as transcending the glory of the sun.

Out of our troubled time we must begin where we are. We must take faith's grain of mustard seed, plant it in the soil of confidence in a Fatherly God, nurture it with love's sunshine and water it with the rains of justice and brotherhood. Only the completion of the process of growth will keep faith's light shining in our darkened world.

We have listened to the explanation of natural causation long enough. Moments of confidence in the Creative Purpose of God have led us to see the real values which have given the universe a meaning. The story of a biologized man forced to submit to a hopeless determinism leaves bitter disappointment in its wake. The moments when we have seen men at their best have been those in which they have been transformed and become truly sons of God.

And if our lives have offered only an imperfect witness, a devotion not yet baptized with the last full measure of sacrifice, certain unselfish souls have been lights along the way. They have been pioneering—nay following in his train, adding to belief the witness of a life willing to take up the cross. In the example of these Christians rests our hope. When Bishop James C. Baker, special emissary of the Methodist Church to Japan, returned from a recent visit he related this incident. Bishop Baker had been sent to Japan in the hope that the present struggle might be averted. Throughout the Orient the military machine of Japan was plunging itself into the very soul of China. Yet in the middle of that fierce struggle Kagawa went about, ministering to human need, sharing in suffering. He was willing to participate in war's privations in the hope that it might be overcome. The American bishop asked the Japanese Christian if there was any word which he had to give to the Christians in America. Without hesitation the little Japanese answered: "Keep the water in the Pacific blue, instead of red." In the face of human tragedy, this plea for peace fell from the lips of this missionary demanding a hearing, for the words issued from his own cross.

Recall the incident of the lamplighter from the boyhood of Harry Lauder. From his father's window in their lake-shore home the boy watched the lamplighter as he moved along through the dense fog. When he passed the house the man was visible, separated from the darkness of night by the light he carried in his hand. But as the distance from the house increased he became less visible until at last he was swallowed up in the inky cloak of night. The Scotch lad would say to himself, "He is gone!" but an instant later another light would come on along the shore and he would know that the lamplighter was still there.

Down the centuries through life's darkest hours the witness of an Augustine, a Thomas, a Luther, a Calvin, a Knox, a Wesley has reassured the Christian, watching with longing eyes, that faith's light has not gone out. Again and again, engulfed in darkness and despair, faith's light has returned and will return through the witness of those who have translated their faith into the Kingdom of the Son.

# Now That War Has Come

By Howard C. Scharfe

*The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord. Proverbs 20:27a.*

THIS past week has been one of tremendous strain and tension for all of us. For in that week we have had to bear the shock of realizing that we are a part of a nation which has entered its second world war within twenty-five years. Many of us expected that it was coming, but one can never fully prepare oneself for the shock of war. It is so difficult to realize beforehand the significance of the last great world power's being pulled into this conflict; it is difficult to realize beforehand what this thing will mean to our homes and our community; it is difficult to realize beforehand the price that war demands for the retention of liberty. But now war has come, and every day we are going to see a little more vividly the price it is demanding of us. It is conceivable that this war will mean the end of democracy for our time. It is conceivable that this war will bankrupt the world financially and morally. It is conceivable that this war will make people more antagonistic to religion than they have ever been in the past two thousand years. Never were Shakespeare's words in "Much Ado About Nothing" more appropriate than they are today: "O what men dare do! What men may do! What men daily do, not knowing what they do!"

Now that war has come, there are probably some who would feel relief if they could convince themselves that we are in a holy war and that God is on our side, but I cannot preach that kind of sermon. For I believe that God is just as dependent on us in this matter as we are on him. If we come through this war with the spirit of freedom intact, it will be because through this whole dreadful business we have kept within ourselves the spirit of freedom. God is as dependent on us as that. When we have been victorious in this war —as we believe we shall be victorious—if we can sit down at a peace table more intent on building a world that will outlaw war than we are intent on destroying an enemy, it will be because even through war America has not lost her vision of real peace. God is as dependent on us as that. Lincoln was right when he said it is not so much a matter of whether or not God is on our side, but—are we on God's side? Or, to put it in our own language, it is not so much a question whether God has chosen us, but—"Have we chosen God?"

As I was thinking about these things a verse in Proverbs came to me. I have wanted to preach on this line for years, but the occasion never seemed to be quite ripe. However, when this new crisis came upon our nation, it almost leaped out of the Bible with the exclamation, "Now!"

This text is a part of the 27th verse of the 20th chapter of Proverbs:" "The spirit of man is the

candle of the Lord." Those words suggest what most of us well know—there are times when the world *is* encompassed by shadows that make it difficult to determine the future—shadows of misunderstanding, intolerance, suffering and war. More than that, these words intimate that there are times when God himself is hampered by the darkness. The Book of Proverbs tells us that in such times of tragedy God turns to the spirit of man as his light in the shaping of things to come. Think of it—God is depending on your spirit and mine to help light the way in these dangerous days!

I

But how are we to keep that candle burning in a time like this? Well, first of all, we can keep ourselves from expecting too much from the winning of this war. War in itself cannot give us what we are paying for. It is true that our first task is to win; but win or lose, this war is going to create tremendous problems in our nation and the world. We must keep our spirits prepared for the immensity of those problems.

Washington Gladden said at the close of the Civil War: "No nation can engage in a protracted war without suffering a serious loss of national probity and honor. The worst losses are outside of the army and after the war. The total effect of war upon the nation is disastrous: inevitably it lowers the moral tone; it scatters the seeds of moral pestilence." Here then is one of the curses of war: it takes so much out of us to win it that we have nothing left to make the right use of what we have won. So it is that the pacifist says nothing is ever gained by war—that nothing is ever gained by resorting to force in anything. Well, I do not believe that. I believe we live in a world in which there are times when we must use physical force; what is more, that God himself, as Lord of life and moral governor of the universe, makes use of force. As Dr. John A. Mackay has pointed out: What about those natural physical sanctions which follow the violation of moral laws? Is there anything more terrifying that can scourge society than venereal disease, which dooms not only the guilty but often generations of innocent people? Yet, asks Dr. Mackay, who will deny that this does teach mankind in the course of the ages the sanctity of the moral law? While the love of God is measureless to seek the lost and forgive the penitent, the justice of God is uncompromising. God says about many phases of life: "Fall in line with the moral principles of the universe—or else." And if one refuses, God has means of compelling him.

So it is in the international world. We of this country believe that every man has his rights, we have at least some hold on the principles of live-and-let-live; we possess to a real degree this thing we call freedom. These things are a part of our religion and our moral code of living and if something, or somebody, tries to take them from us, we have a right to do our utmost to try to eliminate that threat. But let us remember this: war can do nothing more than restrain those forces. There is nothing creative in war. If we devote all our attention and energy to the winning of battles on the field and on the ocean, and do not do some real praying about what we are going to do with victory when we get it, the ghost of 1918 says, "It might be better for you if you did not fight at all." That is why I say if the spirit of man is to remain the candle of the Lord amid the shadows, let us not expect too much from the winning of this war alone.

Japan has been treacherous, she outlawed all the laws of decency in the manner in which she attacked the United States—and for that she will be punished—but, after she has been punished, there still remains the fact that Japan is a group of islands out in the ocean, and her population is increasing at the rate of more than one million a year, and these islands will not hold them—what are we going to do about that? The Japanese men and women have children even as you and I; those children must be fed; and the only way they can be fed is for Japan to trade. She must have raw products to feed her industries, for she must be industrial; she has not enough land to be agricultural—what are we going to do about that? A mere victory over Japan will not solve these problems; the biggest job for both our country and Japan will come after this war is over. America has honorably undertaken this fight, and she is going to win it, but the real test of her honor will come when the fight is over. Amidst the fighting of a war can we keep room in our souls for a little humanity that we may have some moral stamina left for that post-war job? Your spirit and mine—they constitute the candle God is using to look into the future. What does he see? Another war twenty years from now? Or, "These things shall be, a nobler race than e'er the world hath known shall rise"? Which does he see? Our spirits are his candle.

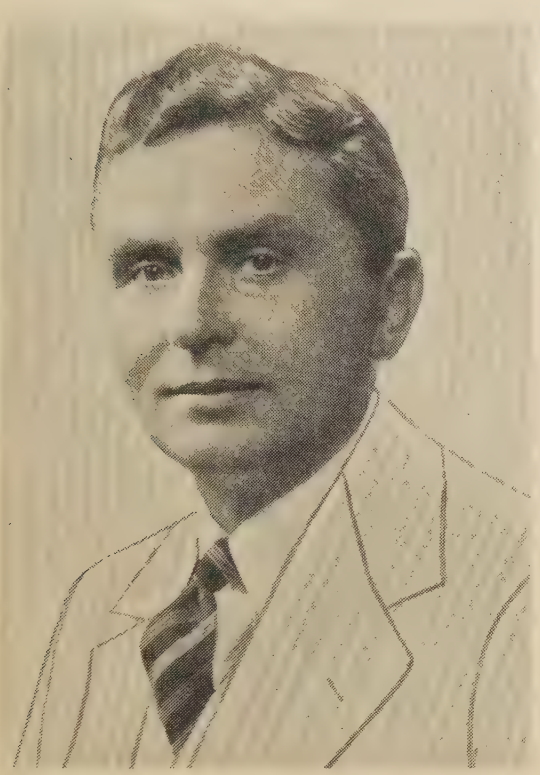
II

Secondly, now that war has come, we must stand up and take it. America has been criticized recently for having gone soft—that the great goal of her people has been comfort and that nothing matters quite so much to them as themselves. We know that much of that criticism has been well founded—that we have been living a comfortable sort of life. Yet it has always been gloriously significant of America that she seemed to have what was necessary when the time of testing came. How well we remember the sacrifices and struggle that followed the crash of 1929! That blow struck first of all at those who had known a comfortable existence. It struck first of all at the wealthy—at the millionaires—at those who we thought had forgotten the way of sacrifice and had gone soft. But those people met the challenge. It is true that some of them fell by the wayside; for the most part, however, they came through with flying colors.

I could take you to the home of one man in this community who is not an isolated case by any means. Before 1929 he was a man of great wealth; from all outward appearance he had gone soft. He lost practically everything he had. Today he has great difficulty in meeting his bills. But how that man is standing up

and taking it! His financial reserve is gone but he had a reserve down inside of him about which I suppose no one had dreamed. That is America—behind the veil of extravagant living there has always been a reserve morale that comes from the very nature of the climate and nation in which we live.

America is made up of the kind of people who never look their best until they are under extreme pressure. So it is that one mother says: "I have two sons in this affair, but there are mothers in Japan whose sons are trying to defeat the things for which America stands, and I guess that I have a right to feel proud that my boys are trying to defend them." So it is that an ex-



Howard C. Scharfe

soldier says: "I came through the last war and I hate to think of our boys going through what we went through, but there are tragedies in the world that must not go on and someone has got to stop them." So it is that even amid the seriousness of these days America is keeping her sense of humor, as evidenced by a sign outside a fraternity house in Los Angeles. The sign read: "You think we are worried, but you should see our Tokyo chapter." While America retains that spirit she can surely stand up and take it.

But to retain it all of us have to help. For parents who have sons in the army, navy or airforce, there will be lonely days and nights. If we have never been neighborly before, we must be neighborly now; we must help one another over the rocky places. The Red Cross, Bundles for Britain, our defense councils are going to make greater and greater demands upon us, and some of the pleasures to which we have been accustomed will have to wait until this job is finished. There will be those, too, who will constantly be complaining that there are blunders in high places and that America should be moving faster in this thing. Let us learn to ask such people politely and quietly—what are you doing to help? A tragic era is an era of need, demanding the best that there is in us. There is no time for a defeatist attitude, no time for us to be unduly nervous worrying about the future, no room for those who make things worse than they are. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, but that spirit must be kept virile, positive, triumphant, and ever in communion with the God whose way it lightens lest its virility, positiveness and triumph be misdirected.

III

And then, too, now that war has come, you have a right to expect, and God has a right to expect, certain things from the church. A minister in wartime is faced with numerous temptations. He may make of himself an amateur news commentator, dressing up those comments with a text and a few verses of Scripture. He may also ignore the war entirely and keep on preaching just as if there were no war at all. Then, too, he may go so far as to make himself a propaganda agent for the government and preach sermons that encourage young men to join the army, the navy or the airforce. I cannot see myself fitting into any of these categories. While this war lasts, and I trust for all of my ministry, I shall try to preach sermons that will interpret the will and love and refuge of God as I see them touching our problems. I have no authority as an interpreter of international affairs, I have no authority to ask anyone's son to go to war. The only authority by which I can speak is that which comes when I allow God to use me in speaking to the spirit of man which is his candle. My task in this war, and I pray God the task of the Christian church may be—to minister to the inner needs of people, to keep alight the spirit of man which God must use as his candle to see the future.

Such a task will mean that the church will try to keep us thinking with our minds instead of our emotions. It is so easy for hatred and animosity to grow to such proportions that our very efficiency is impaired and our souls are dwarfed. There must be a premium on clear thinking. As one London minister prayed in those dreadful months when his city was being bombed, "O God, if victory is given to us, give us also generosity of mind and heart to quickly restore the fellowship of nations, and to think not only of what we see to be wrong and unjust, but to look with sympathy and readiness to make concessions on the injustices of which our enemies complain. If victory cannot or must not be, then in the secret place of all our hearts make us calm and truthful, knowing that still thou dost reign and that at last the kingdom of love and brotherhood must have dominion, and every dark problem be illumined by the rays of eternal truth."

It will be the task of this pulpit, too, to keep men's eyes turning to their Christian faith. Mr. J. Middleton Murry, the noted English writer, wrote a book in 1938 entitled *The Heroes of Thought.* It carried this foreword to American readers: "You have a margin still—ours is gone. You have time to think; we have not. You have breathing space in which to be-

come conscious of the unconscious faith on which the values you instinctively cherish and represent to the world depend." As he continues the foreword, Mr. Murry makes it perfectly clear that the faith he mentions is the Christian faith. Well, now we have no more time to think, either—the war is on us. But we still have our Christian faith, and thank God it keeps telling us that there are some things to which we may hold no matter what may happen around us. We have some great and sublime convictions which are an anchor to the soul in trouble. We have one who we believe can refresh this spirit of man and that he will send us on our way with the words, "I will not leave you comfortless but will come to you."

There is a little magazine called *Now* that comes to my desk. In the current number is a little story that I pass on to you. Many years ago an experienced explorer undertook an arduous expedition into the Pyrenees. He had with him an amateur mountain climber who had never seen that part of the world. Toward the end of the first week they were caught out all night and went to sleep in their blankets on the gaunt mountainside. The amateur was suddenly awakened just before daybreak by a succession of loud noises that sounded as if the whole mountain was about to burst from its foundations. "Wake up!" he shouted to the older man. "Wake up, the end of the world is coming!" The veteran explorer opened his eyes, looked about him, then laughed and said: "No, that isn't the end of the world, my friend; that's the way the dawn always comes up in the Pyrenees."

During the past week the world has been shaking horribly; most of the news from the battlefront has been bad; for some it has looked like the end of the world. But let us remember that there are millions of enslaved people in Europe and Asia who are looking across the ocean at America, now in the war. They know something of our people, something of our ability to sacrifice, something of our love of freedom; they know a little, too, about the kind of men we produce. They had thought the end of their world had come, but not any more. For them, America is dawn coming up in the Pyrenees. That is a real challenge and a great trust. God bless America that in her spirit he may find a candle lighting the way to a world in keeping with him who is the Mighty Counselor and Prince of Peace.

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THE most disturbing feature about Christ's crucifixion is that he was brought to the cross not by bad men but by ordinary people who were acting from familiar and common motives. There were the religious people, who were prejudiced against him; there were the money-changers, who found their profits interfered with; there were the politicians, who were a bit afraid of him. So it is that just ordinary men, with familiar motives, break his heart today.

W. APPLETON LAWRENCE.

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IT may take a crucified church to bring a crucified Christ before the eyes of the world.

WILLIAM E. ORCHARD.

# White Corpuscles of Civilization

BY HAROLD L. LUNGER

*The world is in an accident, has died. Perhaps already—ambulance! ding-ding!—Something instructs the corpuscle inside.—Edna St. Vincent Millay, in Huntsman, What Quarry?*

WHEN the human body meets an accident, when a wound is inflicted or an infection sets in, a marvelous process of first-aid takes place. The blood, which is constantly circulating to all parts of the body carrying food to every cell and taking away the waste products of metabolism, rushes millions of white corpuscles to the scene of the trouble. These are present in the blood all the time, but when an emergency confronts the body, somehow, as if by magic, their number is greatly increased. The bloodvessels in the vicinity of the injured area dilate to make way for the ambulance crew of corpuscles in white.

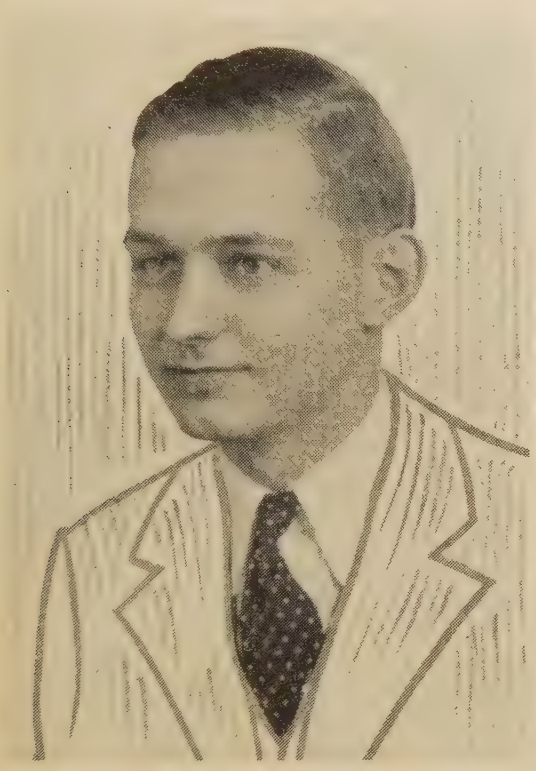
The white corpuscles, in general, are of two types. The leucocytes are the more numerous and are the first to pull up to the curb at the scene of the trouble: that is, to fasten themselves to the walls of the bloodvessels and capillaries. Possessing the power to change their shape, they worm their way through the walls and out into the surrounding tissues. There they run down the troublesome bacteria, surround and destroy them, at the same time walling off and isolating the diseased cell tissue. In the process many of the white cells themselves are killed, but others take their places, and in a normal situation the enemy bacteria are soon completely routed. Then white corpuscles of the second type take up the task. The lymphocytes have the power to replace the damaged cells, knit together the broken tissues and restore the injured part to soundness and health. Thus do the white corpuscles play their silent healing role in your body and mine.

### *HEALING FOR SOCIAL INFECTIONS*

The body politic, the body of humanity likewise has its accidents of famine, flood and sword. Moreover, it has its continuing spots of infection, festering sores caused by the bacteria of poverty, ignorance, selfishness, prejudice and lust. Whether it be a sudden accident or a long continued infection, the individual cells (persons) are attacked and destroyed, the tissues of society in local areas are broken down, and poisons are engendered which affect the whole.

As we look out on the present scene and back across the years, we discover that Christianity and the Christian church have produced the white corpuscles that have maintained in the body of civilization whatever measure of health it has enjoyed. This thought came to me as I read the preface to a little book telling the story of some of the most aggressive Christians in Europe during recent years: Allan Hunter's *White Corpuscles in Europe*. Reporters and generalizers are telling us: "Europe is bleeding to death. Everybody is

pointing a gun or shooting at everybody else. Gangrene has already set in." "But," says the author, "that is not the whole drama. Under the surface something amazingly creative is at work, something fundamental that is rarely mentioned and never advertised—a silent healing process. It is going on all the time, out of sight but terribly potent. Rallying to those places where the wounds are most dangerous are reconciling forces. Patiently they are removing the poisonous matter. Secretly they are making it possible for the broken tissues to be restored. Against the virus of hatred and despair they fling themselves 'without fear and without hope.' They are the white corpuscles of Europe."



HAROLD L. LUNGER

What an excellent picture that is of the manner in which Christians, at their best, have functioned through the ages! They have been, among other things, white corpuscles of civilization, and the church the red bone marrow or the lymphatic tissue which has produced them.

Let us examine a few diagnostic reports of the historians.

### *CORRUPTION OF EARLY CHRISTIAN WORLD*

Christianity was born into a culture which had many running sores: infanticide, gladiatorial combats, slavery, callous disregard for the sick and the poor, and a low regard for the home and marriage bond. As Christians increased in numbers, however, and the influence of Christianity began to spread abroad changes began to take place, scarcely noticeable at first but soon quite apparent. Infected areas began to clear up as Christianity did its silent work. Sidgwick, in his *History of Ethics,* lists as definite changes introduced by Christianity into current moral practice: "(1) the severe condemnation and final suppression of the practice of exposing infants; (2) effective abhorrence of the barbarism of gladiatorial combats; (3) immediate moral mitigation of slavery, and a strong encouragement of emancipation; (4) great extension of the eleemosynary provision made for the sick and the poor."

It is in this latter field that we can trace most clearly the Christian influence. There was an island in the mouth of the Tiber on which wealthy Romans were accustomed to leave their sick and aged slaves to die. This island, however, became the site of one of the first hospitals, established by a Christian senator named Caligulas Tiberias.

In the early second century there existed a group of Christians, the Parabolani, who served as nurses to victims of the plague, Christian and non-Christian alike. Many erstwhile persecutors of Christianity were won to the new religion by the kindness of these Christian nurses who would never have been converted by the mere teaching of Christian doctrine.

The example and work of Christians were thus a cleansing and health-giving influence in corrupt Roman culture. Aristides, an Athenian philosopher, in defending the Christians before the emperor Hadrian in the early second century, described their exemplary conduct and their kindnesses to the poor, widows, homeless and sick, concluding: "Inasmuch as they acknowledge the loving kindness of God toward them, lo, because of them, there flows forth all the beauty that is in the world. . . . Truly this is a new people and there is something divine in them."

### *CHURCH AS RECEIVER FOR THE EMPIRE*

In the year 476 Rome fell and with it the last remnants of the social, economic and political structure of the empire. The years that followed were years of war, robbery, famine and pestilence. Once again Christianity had a large-scale responsibility which it fulfilled in dramatic fashion. The church, with its centralized organization, became the receiver in bankruptcy of the defunct empire, and started out by restoring a measure of law and order. Then with its vast resources it administered relief to the distraught and needy populations. It is hard to imagine what would have happened to Europe had it not been for the healing, restorative work of the Christian church in those dark days, through its hierarchy, its consecrated priests and monks and its faithful laity.

H. G. Wells, in his *Outline of History,* declares flatly: "A very important share in the social recrystallization that went on in the sixth and seventh centuries after the breakdown and fusion of the fourth and fifth was taken by the Christian monastic orders that were now arising in the Western World."

I suspect that few of us have a proper conception of the valuable role that monasteries played during these turbulent years. Some monastic orders, to be sure, withdrew from the world entirely and devoted all their energies to austerity and contemplation. But the more prominent ones, like the Benedictines, in a unique way mixed work and social service with prayers

and devotion. This order was largely responsible for the revival of agriculture; it taught the useful arts, provided relief for the poor, care for the sick and education for the young. Its monasteries were veritable village social service settlements. Its communities were practically the only agencies of human betterment in those dark centuries, and laid the foundations for the era of enlightenment and culture that was to follow.

### THE MORAL CRUSADE OF WESLEY

In seventeenth century England the established church was quite complacent in a day when evils and injustices were multiplying without let or hindrance. Into this situation came George Fox, father of the Quakers. "Notwithstanding the fact of his early years of solitude and withdrawal, Fox was by disposition a social-minded man," declares one of his present-day biographers, Rufus Jones:

> He *saw* and *felt* wrong social conditions as unerringly as he saw and felt the nearness of God.
>
> He was always concerned for toilers. He was deeply distressed by the excessive drinking in taverns. He was shocked as soon as he saw the way men and women lived in jails and prisons. He was convinced that the prisons where people were supposed to be "corrected" were inhuman instruments. He knew that capital punishment was wrong. . . .
>
> It is useless to expect that he would by miraculous insight have the sound principles of sociology which our scientific age is slowly building up. The important fact is that again and again he rightly diagnosed the trouble and put his finger on the diseased spot. With a swift intuition he pronounced against evil customs which had gone unchallenged for centuries, and with the same sure insight he suggested a new way of action.

No body of Christians in modern times better illustrate the healing work of the Christian gospel than the Quakers. Auguste Jorns, in a book entitled *The Quakers as Pioneers in Social Work,* portrays this small Christian sect taking the lead in poor relief, education, the battle against alcoholism, public health, intelligent care of the insane, prison reform and the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery, to say nothing of their witness to the "spirit that taketh away the occasions of wars."

### FRIENDS AS 'WHITE CORPUSCLES'

Quakers are still in the forefront of practical Christianity in our day. *Time* magazine recently reported the work of Quakers in arranging for civilian public service camps for conscientious objectors in cooperation with the Selective Service Administration. At the same time it reviewed the work of the last three decades as follows:

> Quakers seek to overcome evil with good, not in isolated cases but in every way they can. They believe in tackling troubles at their root. In World War I this philosophy led them to start rebuilding ruined French villages even before the Armistice. Afterwards they fed starving children, stopped epidemics, restocked whole provinces with farm tools, seeds and livestock, left permanent centers for "international good will" in Berlin, Vienna, Geneva, Paris. Between wars they built schools in Mexico, helped Okies and jobless miners, ran hostels for refugees. Now they are busy once more in war-torn Europe . . .

—have been since the Spanish Civil War when they fed and cared for homeless children and mothers on both sides of the battle line. Later they started their relief work in Poland and in unoccupied France. Today a group of young Quakers have gone to Mexico to help rebuild villages leveled by recent earthquakes there. Tomorrow they will return to Europe once more to help shattered populations restore the tissues of their personal and communal lives.

How dramatically this illustrates practical Christianity functioning in the role of white corpuscles of humanity! "Rallying to those places where wounds are most dangerous are reconciling forces" armed with sympathetic understanding, a contagious faith, and a desire to serve. "Patiently they are removing the poisonous matter. Secretly they are making it possible for the broken tissues to be restored. Against the virus of hatred and despair they fling themselves" with unselfish devotion. Certainly it is to these armies of white corpuscles that we must look if we expect any real victory for civilization. Who can doubt that in the end this spirit of active good will will conquer, and humanity and human souls be made whole?

### CALL TO ALL CHURCHES

The Quakers have no monopoly on this kind of vital Christianity. I mention them in some detail because they are undoubtedly one of the clearest and most striking illustrations on the contemporary horizon. Other churches like our own—Disciples of Christ—have their missionaries in the war zones of the far east, performing a noble ministry of helpfulness: giving food, shelter and medical aid to victims of war in the name of Christ and our common humanity, counteracting the almost inevitable toxins of bitterness, hatred and despair, and rebuilding faith and hope, courage and love. The churches united in the World Council of Churches are helping to minister to the refugees and prisoners of war in Europe and elsewhere, to relieve some of the physical and spiritual sufferings caused by war, and by maintaining a constant flow of emissaries from one belligerent country to another. The home missions departments of the various denominations, and special commissions of city, state and federal councils of churches keep sensitive Christian spirits in touch with all these infectious forces that might destroy the lives of men.

Whether we look back across the years or out upon the world today we see Christianity continually releasing forces of healing and reconstruction. Wherever men, women and children have suffered through the thoughtlessness, cruelty or greed of others, or through uncontrolled forces of nature, Christians have gone to help and heal. Wherever individuals have suffered through ignorance, doubt, corroding fear or black despair, there Christians have gone with a sympathetic heart and a helping hand.

I do not want to overpaint the picture. Most of

the time most churchmen have been distressingly complacent; but always there have been vital minorities aflame with the passion to serve and redeem humanity from its ills: little communities of monks, groups like the Quakers, "cells" within more easygoing and complacent congregations, consecrated individuals like St. Francis, Grenfell, Jane Addams, Kagawa. Through the centuries the church has been the red bone marrow, the lymphatic tissue, which has constantly poured such white corpuscles into the bloodstream of humanity.

It has often been observed that the church has been the mother of all the humanitarian forward-looking movements in the history of the west: philanthropy, care of the sick, education, abolition of slavery, temperance, social work, peace, social justice. Many of these daughters have since set up housekeeping for themselves. But still the Christian religion is the chief source of their motivation.

### *THE TRUE TASK OF THE CHURCH*

This is as it should be. For this is true religion as Jesus taught and lived it. When he stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth, he read: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; for he has consecrated me to preach good news to the poor; he has sent me to announce to the prisoners their release and to the blind the recovery of their sight; to set the downtrodden at liberty; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

That surely is a religion of social significance as well as personal power. In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus commended to his followers the example of a man whose ritual practices were considered quite invalid by the Jews, but who nevertheless bound up the wounds of a fellow traveler whom he found bruised and half-dead along the road. When Jesus came to picture the last judgment, he indicated that on that day only one thing would be important: whether or not we had given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the homeless, clothes to the naked, care to the sick, cheer to those in prison. Whenever he mentioned "salvation," Jesus used a Greek word which means literally "to keep sound." Salvation thus meant for him the maintenance of or restoration of health. The last chapter of the Bible summarizes the function of Christianity in the phrase: "for the healing of the nations."

White Corpuscles of Civilization! That is what we are called to be. Many occasions present themselves for us to fill this healing role in home, school, office, church and community. Through consecrated giving to our mission boards, councils of churches, and groups like the American Friends Service Committee, we may share, as it were by proxy, in the curative work of Christianity even in distant parts of our own country and across the seas. Thus we can constitute ourselves members of that true church of Jesus Christ which has been described as "a fellowship of those who love in the service of those who suffer."

# A Pastoral Prayer

**By Ralph C. Lankler**

O LORD, in these tragic times may we stand fast in the faith wherein Thou hast made us free. May we give testimony to the belief that Thou art our refuge and strength, an ever present help in time of trouble.

Save our nation, O Lord, from the foes that press upon from within as well as without. Save us from selfishness that may keep us from making necessary sacrifices. Save us from the prejudices of race and class which have divided us in the past and denied our human brotherhood. Save us from the crime and immorality which have been a blight upon our character and the graft and corruption that have been a disgrace to our body politic. Give courage to our citizenry and judgment to our leaders that we may be led in the way of wisdom which only Thou knowest.

Save us, O Lord, from hasty, intemperate or ill-considered words and actions. Although our emotions may be disturbed, restrain us from resorting to hysteria, denunciation or persecution. May we be patient, penitent, humble and tolerant, remembering that the condition of the world is a confession of our failure to live according to Thy will—a sin in which we all share.

Save us, O Lord, from all hatred of our fellow men. If we are called upon to fight, may it not be against them, but against the evil in their hearts. May we search our own hearts to make certain that evil does not possess us. We pray for our Italian, German and Japanese brethren, asking that Thou wilt comfort them in their sorrows and sufferings and enable them to find power to overcome their evil leaders who lead them to destruction.

Save us, O Lord, from becoming ensnared by the transient, expedient or immediate. The times demand that we shall live and serve in the present, but wilt Thou enable us to have an eye for the future. May we think of the preservation and promotion of Christ's church and the planning of the peace which we hope and pray may soon come to our world. Although we are unable to escape the inevitable and bitter experiences with which we are now faced, may we determine that through the guidance of Thy Spirit good shall come from them.

Save us, O Lord, from the anxiety and fear that destroy men's minds as well as their bodies. May we be constant in the faith that even though our material possessions are taken from us and our bodies destroyed, there is no power that can separate us from the love of Christ.

We make this prayer in the name and for the sake of the great Prince of Peace, Thine only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom Thou didst send into the world that all men might through him be saved from their sins. Amen.

# Preaching Out of the Overflow

By William L. Stidger

As a boy I grew up in the West Virginia oil fields, with the flare of great burning gas jets from two-inch gaspipe openings going day as well as night, with oil derricks in a neighbor's backyard and with the good smell of oil in my nostrils all day long, and now and then with the terrific blast of an explosion of nitroglycerin shaking the very walls of our brick home in Cameron, West Virginia; so I know oil wells. I have also more or less grown up with preaching from boyhood days, through college to a full and complete reading and collecting of a complete set of the Yale Lectures and most of the other literature dealing with this important subject.

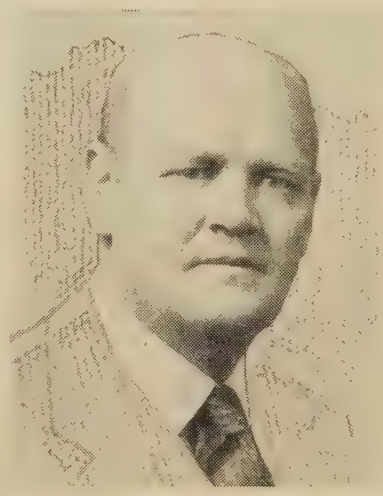
And there is at least a symbolic connection between oil wells and preaching. When I was a boy I used to hear hardened old oil men talk of three types of oil wells. There was the "dry hole." That was a complete flop. Second, there was the well that had to be pumped. That was better but it was far from a hilarious success. Then there was what they called the "overflow well," which, after long toiling and deep drilling, down, down, down until they struck a pool, suddenly burst forth, overflowing pipe, derrick and tanks; shooting into the air for two hundred feet with a rich, abundant overflow from deep subterranean pools and channels.

### ● *Three Types of Preaching*

So, without much stretch of logic or of the imagination we have a right to say that there are three types of preaching: the dry holes (the very universal symbol for a particularly bad thing is that "it is as dry as a sermon"); the preaching that has to be pumped up and out; and then there is that type of preaching which bursts forth like an overflowing stream—a great, rich, overflowing oil well, a spring of everlasting water from deep, hidden pools. That is what I call "preaching out of the overflow."

Dr. Black, in *The Mystery of Preaching,* says: "A minister is continually giving out each week, even if it be only 'penny packets'; and there must be some method of refilling the coffer. Real joy in preaching depends upon our having more ideas for preaching than we can ever use; and this fine joy, akin to elation, comes only when our minds and our notebooks are crammed full. The best preaching is always the natural overflow of a ripe mind and the expression of a growing experience. A good sermon is never worked up, but worked out."

Phillips Brooks was an overflow preacher. Since living in Boston I have found from old newspaper clippings of his day some great phrases describing his preaching: "Phillips Brooks was as copious as a great reservoir." "He poured forth in great torrents like an upturned cloud." "He had a rich profusion like a tropical jungle." "He may be said to compose royally as one who has the storehouse of the universe and of eternity behind him and nothing is farther from his thoughts than an intellectual economy."



William L. Stidger

My theory of preaching—and I advance it with a complete and confident assurance of a quarter-century's experience and observation—is: that the great, unforgettable preachers of the English-speaking peoples of the past, and the contemporary preachers who attain any reputation of lasting greatness, are what I call "overflow preachers": those who have such basic educational reserves, who live so largely, who read so widely, who have such an abundance or overflow of physical energy and of intellectual background and religious experience, that the sermons they preach flow up and out from inner deeps of power and content.

I first set forth this, my own philosophy of great preaching, in a book entitled *Preaching Out of the Overflow.* I now have in preparation a book which I am calling *Men Who Have Preached Out of the Overflow:* men like Phillips Brooks, George A. Gordon, Edward Everett Hale, Henry Ward Beecher, George Whitefield, General William Booth, Dwight L. Moody, Bishop Matthew Simpson, Bishop James W. Bashford, Bishop William A. Quayle, William Ellery Channing. These immortals of the Christian ministry, these geographers of the spiritual uplands, were all overflow preachers, who, with a rich abundance within them, simply overflowed like a great Nile to enrich the soil of the souls of those whom they served. They were what might facetiously be called "Old Faithfuls" in the ministry who filled their subterranean channels to a bursting, powerful richness of content and then at regular intervals overflowed in beauty and richness of content.

### ● *Physical Strength and Great Preaching*

In my research concerning these great overflow preachers I have discovered that first of all they preached out of an overflow of physical energy in one form or another—for that is one of the first essentials of great preaching.

Sometimes I have been appalled at the egotistical audacity, the unparalleled mendacity of candidates presenting themselves for the ministry who are weak and puny, unattractive physically, chronically ill, and in whom there is no hope of health—when it seems to me that the Lord God Almighty has a right to expect the finest, fairest, strongest, most attractive in physical energy and strength to undertake the supreme task of bringing in the Kingdom of God. I have often wondered if the fact that a weak man presents himself as a candidate for the ministry is not the supreme egotism of all egotisms. I wonder? But of one thing I am certain, and that is that these immortals of the Christian ministry of the past have all had a deep sense of responsibility about the important matter of building up their energies, their bodies; of taking care of themselves physically so that they would have an overflow of vital forces for the great task of preaching.

Henry Ward Beecher used to go to his farm in upper New York State every Saturday and recreate his body and mind; go to bed early Saturday night so that he could as he said "sleep vicariously for my people." Not one of these great men had the unfortunate modern habit of waiting until late Saturday night to write his sermons, losing sleep and then going into his pulpit to hand on the tag end of his powers to some hungry congregation so that it might be said be-

hind his back, "The hungry sheep looked up and were not fed."

"That day is not lost which is spent in the hunt," says an old Arabian proverb. Nor is any time lost for the modern minister who builds up strong reserves of physical energy, health and overflowing vitality looking toward a continuously effective service in the eminently satisfying but often heartbreaking—and body-breaking—task of the Christian ministry.

### ● *Ideas and Intellectual Resources Necessary*

Second: Great preaching comes out of an overflow of ideas and intellectual resources.

I once knew a young preacher who was physically superb and was going like a "house afire" in his ministry, attracting great crowds. But it was apparent, as one of his friends said rather crudely but effectively, that he was "sucking his sermons out of his thumb." Being a frank person, this friend went to that young man and said: "Jim, you'll either get something into your head or you are through in five years. Up to this time you have carried forward on your looks, your physique, your vivacity, friendliness and physical charm. But that fades in time and you had better be storing up something in your head."

That was good advice, and I am glad to say that this young fellow took it and continued on in his ministry, for he added an overflow of intellectual content to his physical overflow—and that combination is hard to stop.

I was once lecturing to preachers in Kansas on books in the life of the minister. I told that audience that I had read an average of a book a day during all of my ministry, which was true—and I still do. But one old brother in that audience seemed to doubt it, so, in the open forum which followed, he sarcastically yelped at me: "Young fellow, you say that you read a book a day—which I doubt; but all I gotta say is that the average preacher hereabouts doesn't read a book a month."

Now, if I were answering that man today I think that I would be much more Christian in my reply, but being young at that time I replied: "And, my brother, that is exactly why he would be the *average* preacher—or the average doctor, or the average lawyer—or the average anything in professional life."

I still believe that to be true in the main—that the reason why any preacher remains the average preacher is that he has never learned to read enough to give intellectual content and overflow to his preaching. Such a preacher lives continually on the edge of homiletic bankruptcy. He lives a hand-to-mouth existence and, as was true in the famous case of Old Mother Hubbard,

When she went there
The cupboard was bare
And so the poor dog had none!

### ● *Contributions of Experience To Preaching*

Third, great preaching comes out of the overflow of life's experiences. The wise preacher will never lose a chance to go through a General Electric laboratory, a steel mill, a glove factory, a coal mine, a motion picture studio. He will never let a day go by that he does not have some human adventure. He will be a steady and constant visitor with his people because out of such experiences comes a great overflow in preaching. Baseball, football, basketball games will frequently find him looking on. He will never lose a chance to take a summer trip to Europe, the Holy Land, Mexico, or to explore his own national highways and byways. He will become a part of the summer transcontinental caravan. He will frequently take to the road.

Phillips Brooks used to say, "The man who wants to see me is the man I want to see." He also used to say, "The more men I meet and the more experiences I have, the more wells I have to draw from." Robert Louis Stevenson used to say to S. S. McClure when that great editor apologized for changing and cutting his manuscripts: "Do what you please. There is plenty more where that came from." Such is the spirit of the creative preacher who lives largely and experiences widely.

### ● *Religion Essential to Good Preaching*

Fourth: Sermons and great preaching come out of an overflow of religious living and religious experience.

Religious experience, prayer, meditation, Bible reading always produce a vital overflow in preaching. Spiritual experience is always a Roosevelt Dam which, through its stored up resources, not only produces power but also produces streams of spiritual overflow which make the "desert to blossom as the rose." The preachers of the early Christian church had little to talk about save their religious experiences: something which had happened to them; a strange man whom they had met and who had changed their lives. They went about the earth talking and telling people about this man and this thing which had happened to them. I believe in what the early American churchmen called "conversion." But I also believe in another type of conversion—what I call being converted every week through something: a book, meeting a friend, a prayer meeting, a great poem, an experience in one's round of calling; through praying beside some sick bed, going through sorrow, suffering and tragedy with a lonely family. Indeed a real preacher is not converted once but he has a continuing experience of conversion. He ought to be converted in some way and to something every week of his life and the next Sunday he ought to go into his pulpit to preach out of the overflow of that spiritual regeneration.

### ● *Without Love Sermons Are Futile*

Fifth: Great preaching always comes out of an overflow of good old-fashioned *love*. I italicize that word purposely. It needs to be.

The minister with an overflow of affection for people will never be able to see with dry eyes a tired woman on a streetcar going home from work; a scrubwoman go into a city skyscraper at night; a windowwasher hanging from his straps above the city street; a father in overalls going home with his dinner pail to his family after the day's toil. If he has love in his heart he will want to sit down with them and have a talk. A boy orator on his great contest night will bring a rise of sympathy to this man; and Ted Williams smashing out a home run, the college full-back running the length of the field for a touchdown, a pregnant woman carrying her great and beautiful burden, a girl in a circus on the high trapeze surpassing herself in one extra swing to amuse her public, a harlot on a dark streetcorner, a beggar at the door, an Italian garbage collector at some garbage can, the newsboy who throws in a paper on a snowy morning—all of these will find in the overflow of love that the real minister has, a sense of sympathy and understanding which will make them feel that such a preacher is a friend. Out of this overflow will come a feeling something akin to that which is expressed in the lines of a great poet who sang:

A man was starving in Capri;
I felt his gaze, I heard his moan,
And knew his hunger as my own.
I saw at sea a great fog bank
Between two ships that struck and sank;
A thousand screams the heavens smote,
And every scream tore through *my* throat.
No hurt I did not feel, no death
That was not mine; mine each last breath
That crying, met an answering cry
From the compassion that was I.
All suffering mine, and mine its rod;
Mine pity like the pity of God.

Out of such an overflow of love, pity, sympathy and compassion the great overflow preaching of the world has come and shall come forever.

# • WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

*RECEIVING his B.A. from Yale,* Rev. PAUL W. HOON graduated from Union Theological Seminary, and received his Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh in systematic theology. Following pastorates in New Milford and Bridgeport, Conn., he went to First Methodist Church, New Rochelle, N. Y., last year. This is one of the oldest Methodist churches in America, having been founded in 1771.

*Rev.* KYLE HASELDEN *received his B.A.* degree *(cum laude)* at Furman University, and his B.D. at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School (1937). He served as pastor of the Warburton Avenue Baptist Church, Yonkers, N. Y., 1937-41, and began his present ministry at Trinity Baptist, Minneapolis, in September of last year.

*Receiving his academic education at Al-*bion College and DePauw University, Rev. HOMER V. YINGER was awarded his B.D. degree at Chicago Theological Seminary in 1938. Associate pastor at Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, 1938-40, he has been pastor of First Congregational, La Crosse, Wis., since December 1940. Mr. Yinger's father was a Methodist minister in the Michigan conference, his mother is an ordained minister and he has three brothers in the ministry—two Methodist and one Congregational.

*Rev.* KENNETH MORGAN EDWARDS *at-*tended Princeton and Drew seminaries. At Drew he received the B.D. degree *(cum laude)* in 1938. His early pastorates were at Hummelstown and Halifax, Pa., and at Williams, Ariz. Since 1941 he has ministered at the Community Methodist Church, Rosemead, Calif.

*Rev.* HOWARD C. SCHARFE *is a Cana-*dian by birth and graduated at Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. He was secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in Ottawa for three years, then went to Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he received his B.D. He was also awarded an M.A. by Columbia University. For two years he was associate minister at Westminster Church, Buffalo, and went to his present post, First Presbyterian and Trinity Church, South Orange, N. J., in the autumn of 1939.

*Rev.* HAROLD L. LUNGER *came two* years ago to the Austin Boulevard Christian Church, Chicago, after having served churches in Akron, Ohio, and West Haven, Conn. For a brief period he directed traveling seminars for the National Religion and Labor Foundation. Mr. Lunger received his theological education at Yale Divinity School.

*Rev.* RALPH C. LANKLER *is minister of* the Memorial Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.

*Dr.* WILLIAM L. STIDGER *is head of the* department of preaching at Boston University School of Theology.

# TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

ALBERT BUCKNER COE, First Congregational, Oak Park, Ill. "In a Time of Tension." Isa. 40:1—"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people."

HUBERT N. DUKES, First Congregational, Jackson, Mich. "In This Crisis, Let the Church Be the Church." Mark 11:17—"Is it not written: My house shall be a house of prayer for all the nations?"

D. W. CHARLTON, Eastport Baptist, Annapolis, Md. "All-Out Enlistment." II Cor. 8:5—"They did far more than I hoped. For first, in obedience to God's will, they gave themselves to the Lord." (Goodspeed)

E. P. INGERSOLL, First Presbyterian, Fort Morgan, Colo. "Gods That Cannot Save." Isa. 45:20—"praying to gods that cannot save."

S. D. MCQUEEN, Sparks, Nev. "V is for Vision." Prov. 29:18—"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
*Title of sermon*

. . . . . .
*Text used (write out the text)*

. . . . . .
*Name of minister*

. . . . . .
*Name of church*

. . . . . .
*Address*

DAVID R. MCKECHNIE, First Baptist, Oconomowoc, Wis. "Christian Responsibility." I Cor. 14:1—"You must pursue love . . ." (Goodspeed)

T. H. THIELPAPE, Crescent Place Reformed, Yonkers, N. Y. "Bomb-proof." Luke 21:36—"From hour to hour keep awake, praying that you may succeed in escaping all these dangers to come and [succeed] in standing before the Son of Man."

CARL BIHLDORFF, First Unitarian, Louisville, Ky. "Lest We Forget." Deut. 6:12—"Beware, lest ye forget the Lord."

G. R. BELL, Methodist, Barron, Wis. "Our Source of Power for Sanity, Life and Vision." II Chron. 7:14—"if my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I also will hear from the heavens and will forgive their sins and heal their land."

ROBERT INGLIS, Plymouth Congregational, Oakland, Cal. "Through the Darkness—a Light." John 1:5—"The Light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness cannot destroy it."

CARL H. SANDGREN, Gethsemane Lutheran, Seattle, Wash. "The Christian's Trust in Wartime." Psalm 27:1-6.

KENNETH G. ROGERS, First Methodist, Mount Dora, Fla. "Selling Out." Heb. 12:17—"Esau . . . sold his birthright."

WILLIAM F. KOSMAN, Salem Reformed, Allentown, Pa. "The Eternal Now." II Cor. 6:2—"Behold, now is the accepted time."

# The Editor's Page

## The Event of the Month

**This Great Day for Christian Missions**

DON'T LET anybody tell you that the cause of Christian missions has been defeated by the war! These are dark days for this enterprise which lies so close, so integrally close, to the heart of the church. Yes, dark days. But dark days are God's days! In the hidden depths of his providence he is making ready a vaster opportunity for his church than any it has known since its earliest period. And his servants, the church's leadership, are seeking his will with a prayerful devotion like that of the historic haystack prayer meeting, only on a vaster scale. I know this, because I attended the annual meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference in Trenton, New Jersey, in mid-December. I went as a visitor and learner. All the others—340 of them—were delegates and specialists representing the boards of 63 denominations and a total of 123 agencies, virtually the whole of North American Protestantism. What did they do? They told what had been done during the past year by all these agencies. They looked at the present world scene, noting the doors that have been closed (like Japan), the doors that remain open and the doors that have been thrown wide open by the very war itself. They tried to visualize what lay behind these doors, both those that are open and those momentarily closed. In this endeavor they had the counsel of men and women who had just come from these fields and knew whereof they spoke. And, on the basis of the knowledge thus made available, they planned for the future. And such plans! Wartime plans and post-war plans—far-reaching, world-embracing plans of such magnitude that only God can bring them to pass, but which God can accomplish only with the intelligent devotion of his church. And the one persistent determination that ran through all this planning was this: What we do we must do together! The churches cannot match the new day, only the Church with God's help can match it.

## The Book of the Month

PRAYER. *By George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. $2.75.*

WHAT Dr. Fosdick's famous book, *The Meaning of Prayer,* did for our Christian faith a generation ago, this brand new volume by his New York neighbor, Dr. Buttrick, is destined to do for us who face the problems and responsibilities of a new time. I am in the act of reading it, not quite done, but I lay it aside for the moment with the sensation of one who has just been bathed in a warm, pure, healing stream. We know Dr. Buttrick as a great preacher, a homilist of the first rank, who has an almost uncanny insight into the depths of our hearts and reveals us to ourselves in the incandescent lights of a Scripture text whose meaning lay hidden until he touched it with a gracious magic. What a preacher he is! And what glory he brings to our sacred profession! Who among us has not wished to explore the deeper ranges of his understanding which darts up in the thirty-minute flash of insight which is all that a sermon can be? This book gives us this privilege. Here the preacher becomes the philosopher. Here he shows us the great convictions—seasoned, ripened, hardened by mental conflict—out of which his sermons spring. Clearing a little spot for himself, called prayer, in the jungle of "this great roundabout, the world," he moves out in every direction, exploring and illuminating the confusion of modern life. Prayer is the pivot of all true religion; it is the last trench where Christian faith makes its final stand. Defeated here, the whole war is lost. Victorious here, faith puts all its foes to rout. Buttrick's book comes to our beleaguered faith with facts and truth marshaled like a fresh army of reinforcements. Its every page is too rich and its total impact is too formidable for me to deal in details. You need this book. You never needed it so much as right now. Get it! And get it quick! It will restore your fainting soul!

## A Thought for the Month

**Getting the Right Time from the Sky**

LET me make my own and pass on to you this luminous paragraph from Dr. Buttrick's new book: "If our purpose is at odds with the Purpose of the world which brought us to birth, our purpose cannot stand. Astounding that we should live for the means, and never inquire for the end! Doubly astounding that we should assume that unworthy means can hold their own poison and never infect any end! 'Now is the judgment of this world!' Men and nations, labor unions and churches and employers' associations, may make their individual clocks, but not their individual time: they must take their time from the Sky, or turn life into confusion. Prayer gives celestial time. Sailors may make their own journeyings, but not their own map: they may not paint their own horizons on the cabin ceiling: they must obey the stars and a magnetism-out-of-sight, or the ocean lanes become shambles. Prayer gives the guidance of stars. Men may choose their architecture, but not their own rules of construction: they must build by an 'invisible vertical,' or the house will fall. Prayer is the 'invisible Vertical.' Prayer gives us the master light for all our seeing, the 'chord of nature' for all our music. The façade of Bath Abbey shows two ladders on which men are climbing up and up—to Christ. Is *that* the End, and this world only a ladder? We would then not care too much about this world, except to strengthen its rungs that men may climb."

Charles Clayton Morrison

# PRAYER

The New Book by
GEORGE A. BUTTRICK

Answering a long-felt need, this book will help many to find the lost word—"prayer."

Vividly, trenchantly Dr. Buttrick declares that human knowledge has reached an impasse, that man must once more make the creative venture of prayer without which the world is only nonsense. Here is a powerful plea for the revival of an experience which shall unify man's aspirations and empower his hopes.

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